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September 12, 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. KISSINGER

FROM: Helmut Sonnenfeldt

SUBJECT: Helmut Schmidt's Conversations in Moscow

Schmidt passed on a copy of notes taken during his conversations with Gromyko, Polyansky, and Spiridonov in Moscow on 21-22 August (Tab B). The essence of the talks had already been conveyed to Embassy Bonn by Eugen Selbmann, and Schmidt gave an interview to Die Zeit. The notes do not add much to what was already known (see Embassy Bonn cable at Tab C).

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Highlights

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-- The Soviets seemed at pains to strike a generally conciliatory note; Gromyko claimed Soviet policy was flexible; he wanted improvement in relations with Bonn and would consider any proposals on European security etc.;

-- on basic East-West issues nothing new developed; considerable Soviet stress on accepting status quo, recognition of borders, including the border between East and West Germany; German signature of NPT was "necessary;" Soviets did not want to cut off West Berlin or change its status, but could never accept West Berlin as part of FRG;

-- on European security, the time had come to begin; adequate preparations should be made; could hold pre-conference exchanges, at lower levels, to consider any ideas; both Germanies should participate; Europeans would decide on outside participation (US and Canadian participation);

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-- on China, despite Schmidt's probing, the Soviets played down the impact of incidents on their European policy;

-- NPD was raised by the Soviets in rather pro forma manner.

Schmidt was intrigued by one passage in the conversation with Polyansky, who said that the Soviets could not improve relations at the expense of concessions on principal Soviet positions or those of its allies. At this point Falin of the Foreign Ministry interjected: Polyansky did not say the Soviets would not permit concessions by Soviet allies (this interpreted by Schmidt to be a reference to Gomulka's proposals for recognizing Polish borders).

I have prepared a letter from you to Schmidt thanking him for sending these notes to you.

RECOMMENDATION:

That you sign the letter at Tab A.

WHyland/hhk

Copies:

Secretariat - 2 w/o Tab B, which is long report in German.

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Oct 6 1969

Dear Helmut:

I want you to know how much I appreciate your sending me the notes of your conversation with Moscow. I found them quite interesting. Though it is difficult to tell, I assume that the tone was not hostile and that the Soviets seemed to be making an effort to be amicable. Now that you have been in both Washington and Moscow over the summer, perhaps you have some thoughts on the state of East-West relations. If so, I would be happy to hear from you.

Warmest regards,

(Signed) Henry

Henry A. Kissinger

Mr. Helmut Schmidt
SPD Floor Leader
The Bundeshaus
53 Bonn
West Germany

W Hyland/hhk/Sept 12, 1969

Copies:

Secretariat - 2

WH file - 1

HAK chron - 1

State Dept. review completed
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EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Bonn, Germany

September 4, 1969

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger
Special Assistant for National
Security Affairs
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Kissinger:

Yesterday evening I received the attached letter for you from Helmut Schmidt enclosing a copy of the minutes of his conversations on August 21 and 22 in Moscow. His office asked me to send you the document through our channels.

Sincerely yours,


Jonathan Dean
Counselor of Embassy
for Political Affairs

Enclosure:
Letter dated Sept. 1

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HELMUT SCHMIDT

Mitglied des Deutschen Bundestages
Vorsitzender
der Sozialdemokratischen
Bundestagsfraktion

53 Bonn Bundeshaus

September 1, 1969

Dear Henry:

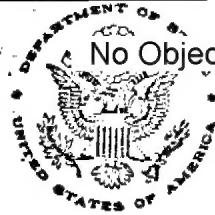
Ten days ago, accompanied by two Social-Democratic MPs, I had some talks with Soviet officials in Moscow. The mere fact of these talks, at first, had been sharply criticized by Strauß and others. In the meantime, however, a rather friendly view has prevailed in public opinion.

I guess your Embassy has reported on the fact, but does not know the content of these talks. In case of interest on the part of your staff, I do enclose a photostatic copy of the minutes. Please let it be made sure that the paper is handled confidentially. The paper has, of course, also been given to Willy Brandt and Kiesinger.

Yours truly,

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger
The White House
Washington, D.C.
USA

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FILE COPY

INFO OCT 01, CIAE 00, DODE 00, JPM 04, H 02, INR 07, L 03, NSAE 00, NSC 10,
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INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
USMISSION BERLIN
USMISSION NATO

ALLEN
BERGSEN
CHAPIN
HANPERIN
HOUSEK
KEENY
LENNITZER
LYNN
MORR
MORRIS
SAUNDERS
SCHNEIDER
VARY

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 2 BONN 11499

SUBJ: FRG-USSR RELATIONS: SCHMIDT VISIT TO MOSCOW

REF: MOSCOW 4541 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. HELMUT SCHMIDT HAS INDICATED THAT HIS CONVERSATIONS IN MOSCOW YIELDED NO INDICATIONS OF NEW SOVIET ATTITUDES ON THE MAJOR WESTERN PROPOSALS, NOW BEFORE THEM, SUCH AS THE BERLIN INITIATIVE, THE RENUNCIATION OF THE USE OF FORCE, OR THE SALT. MOREOVER, SCHMIDT BELIEVES THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE NOT CONCRETE IDEA AT PRESENT OF WHAT MIGHT BE DISCUSSED AT AN ESC. SCHMIDT THOUGHT IT POSSIBLY SIGNIFICANT THAT A SOVIET DIPLOMAT HINTED THAT MOSCOW WOULD NOT OPPOSE EVENTUAL "CONCESSIONS" TO THE WEST BY ITS WARSAW PACT ALLIES. THE CHIEF SOVIET INTEREST DURING THE VISIT SEEMED TO BE IN IMPROVING ECONOMIC RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. HELMUT SCHMIDT, SPD FLOOR LEADER, GAVE AN INTERVIEW ON HIS AUGUST 21-23 MOSCOW TRIP (REFTEL) TO THE WEEKLY DIE ZEIT OF AUGUST 29. WE HAVE DISCUSSED THE VISIT PRIVATELY WITH SELBMANN, THE SPD'S PARLIAMENTARY GROUP'S EAST EUROPEAN EXPERT WHO ACCOMPANIED SCHMIDT TO MOSCOW AND DRAFTED THE MEMORANDA OF THE CONVERSATIONS WITH POLYANSKIY.

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GROMYKO AND SPIRIDONOV FOLLOWING WHICH SUPPLEMENTS INFORMATION IN REFTEL, BASED ON INTERVIEW AND CONVERSATION WITH SELBMANN.

3. EUROPEAN SECURITY CONFERENCE (ESC)

(A) SELBMANN SAID THAT IT BECAME QUITE CLEAR DURING THE CONVERSATIONS THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE NO IDEA AT ALL WHAT THEY WOULD WANT TO DISCUSS AT A EUROPEAN SECURITY CONFERENCE. THEY TOLD SCHMIDT THAT WHAT THEY WANTED WAS CONSULTATIONS AMONG THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES ABOUT AN AGENDA, AT A CERTAIN POINT DURING WHICH THE USSR WOULD PRESENT ITS PROPOSALS. SELBMANN GAINED THE IMPRESSION THAT THE SOVIETS ENVISAGE A SERIES OF PREPARATORY CONFERENCES AT THE FOREIGN MINISTER OR DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER LEVEL. GROMYKO AND POLYANSKIY BOTH STRESSED THAT THE USSR WAS MAKING A "SERIOUS" PROPOSAL BUT THAT ITS POLICY WAS FLEXIBLE.

(B) IN HIS ZEIT INTERVIEW, SCHMIDT CONFIRMED THAT THE SOVIETS LOOK UPON ESC AT THE MOMENT FROM A PURELY PROCEDURAL POINT OF VIEW. THE THREE MAIN CONVERSATION PARTNERS ALL EXPRESSED DIFFERENT VIEWS ABOUT THE CONFERENCE, WHICH WAS EVIDENCE OF A LACK OF CLARITY IN THE SOVIET POSITION. SCHMIDT CONCLUDED THAT THE ESC HAD BEEN BUILT INTO THE BUDAPEST APPEAL ON SHORT NOTICE, AS A WAY OF MAINTAINING UNITY AMONG THE EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES IN LINE AND OF EMPHASIZING CONTINUTY WITH THE BUDAPEST AND KARLOVY VARY PROPOSALS OF 1966 AND 1967.

4. NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY

(A) SELBMANN REPORTED THAT GROMYKO HAD RAISED THIS BUT IN A RELAXED FASHION, SAYING THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD REGARD FRG SIGNATURE "AS A POSITIVE FACT" WHICH WAS "NECESSARY", AND WOULD BE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO FRG-SOVIET RELATIONS. THERE WAS NO URGENCY OR INSISTANCE IN THE SOVIET PRESENTATION.

(B) SCHMIDT STATED THAT HE HAD TOLD THE SOVIETS AGAIN THAT THE SPD WAS READY TO SIGN. GROMYKO DODGED SCHMIDT'S QUESTION AS TO WHETHER THE SOVIETS WOULD BE WILLING TO APPLY ARTICLE II OF THE UN CHARTER (COMMENT: AS PROPOSED BY THE FRG IN ITS OFFER TO EXCHANGE DECLARATIONS RENCUNGING FORCE (SEE BONN

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8538 NOTAL).

5. SALT

SCHMIDT SAID THAT THE SOVIETS HAD TOLD HIM THAT "NEGOTIATIONS" ON STARTING NEGOTIATIONS WERE IN PROGRESS. HE GAINED IN MOSCOW THE SAME IMPRESSION AS HE HAD A MONTH EARLIER IN WASHINGTON: THAT NEITHER SIDE HAD YET DECIDED ON ITS BASIC POSITION OR ON THE PROCEDURES IT WISHES TO FOLLOW IN CONDUCTING THE SALT. SCHMIDT THOUGHT THAT CURRENT SOVIET TACTICS VIS-A-VIS THE WEST CONSISTED OF TRYING TO CARRY ON TWO DIALOGUES SIMULTANEOUDLY - ON SALT WITH THE US AND ON AN ESC WITH THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.

6. BERLIN ACCESS.

SCHMIDT ASSERTED THAT THE SPD DELEGATION HAD INTENTIONALLY NOT DISCUSSED THIS QUESTION, WHICH WAS THE SUBJECT OF AN ALLIED INITIATIVE. ON THE BERLIN PROBLEM GENERALLY, THE SOVIETS HAD REITERATED THEIR FAMILIAR LINE: THAT THE FRG WAS RAISING UNJUSTIFIED CLAIMS TO WEST BERLIN.

7. GDR-FRG RELATIONS.

SELBMANN TOLD US THAT THE SOVIETS HAD RESPONDED "WITH THE GREATEST RESERVATION" TO SCHMIDT'S EFFORTS TO INTEREST THEM IN PROMOTING FRG-GDR TALKS. THE ONLY HOPEFUL ASPECTS, ACCORDING TO SELBMANN, WERE THAT IN RELATION TO THE GDR, THE SOVIETS HAD NOT RAISED THE ISSUE OF DE JURE RECOGNITION, SAYING RATHER THAT THE FRG SHOULD RECOGNIZE THE "EXISTENCE" OF THE GDR AND RENOUNCE "THE SOLE REPRESENTATION CLAIM."

8. NPD.

SCHMIDT TOLD DIE ZEIT THAT THE SOVIETS TENDED TO OVER-RATE THE DANGER FROM THIS PARTY BUT THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THE REASONS FOR SUCH AS ASSESSMENT.

9. ECONOMIC RELATIONS.

(A) SELBMANN SAID THAT THE SOVIETS KEPT EMPHASIZING THAT THE POSSIBILITIES HERE WERE VERY GREAT BUT GAVE NO INDICATION

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WHATSOEVER OF WILLINGNESS TO CONCLUDE AGREEMENTS CONTAINING A BERLIN CLAUSE. POLYANSKIY KEPT INSISTING ON THE IMPOSTANCE OF "COMMERCIAL RELATIONS ON A BASIS OF EQUALITY."

(B) SCHMIDT STRESSED THE PREDOMINANT SOVIET INTEREST IN BETTERING ECONOMIC RELATIONS BUT HE DOUBTED THAT MOSCOW WOULD MAKE POLITICAL CONCESSIONS AS A RESULT OF THIS INTEREST. SCHMIDT INDICATED THAT HE FAVORED LONG-TERM ECONOMIC RELATIONS SINCE THEY WERE "THE MOST SUITABLE WAY" OF ADJUSTING RELATIONS BETWEEN STATES.

10. OTHER EUROPEAN ISSUES.

SELBMANN AND SCHMIDT BOTH ATTACHED MUCH IMPORTANCE TO AN EXPLANATORY REMARK MADE DURING THE COURSE OF THEIR CONVERSATION WITH POLYANSKIY BY FALIN, CHIEF OF FOREIGN MINISTRY DEPARTMENT

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 P 03, RSC 01, PRS 01, SS 20, USIA 12, ACDA 16, AEC 11, SCI 05, COM 08,
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 TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5042
 INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
 AMEMBASSY WARSAW
 AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
 UFHJA/USMSN BERLIN 4675
 USMSN NATO

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II. AFTER POLYANSKIY HAD SAID THAT THE SOVIETS, WHILE INTERESTED IN IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH THE FEDREP, WERE NOT GOING TO MAKE CONCESSIONS AT THE COST OF THE SOVIET POSITION OR THAT OF ITS ALLIES, FALIN BROKE IN TO POINT OUT THAT POLYANSKIY HAD "NOT" REPEAT "NOT" SAID THAT THE SOVIET UNION WAS NOT PREPARED TO PERMIT ITS ALLIES TO MAKE CONCESSIONS. SELBMANN INTERPRETED THIS REMARK AS AN INDICATION THE THE SOVIETS WOULD PERMIT THE POLES TO COME TO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE FRG ON THE ODER-NEISSE AND THE CZECHS ON MUNICH IF THEY WISHED.

IV. CHINA

SELBMANN SAID THERE HAD BEEN A INCONCLUSIVE DISCUSSION OF SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS WITH ALL THREE SOVIET LEADERS, AND AN ESPECIALLY LONG ONE WITH SPIRIDONOV. SOVIET JOURNALISTS WHO ATTENDED THE SOCIAL FUNCTIONS GIVEN FOR THE SPD DEPUTIES (INCLUDING ZHUKOV OF PRAVDA) KEPT EMPHASIZING THAT THE BORDER CLASHED SHOULD NOT BE SEEN AS A REAL CONFLICT. THEY TOOK PAINS TO DISPEL ANY IDEA THAT PRESSURE FROM COMMUNIST CHINA MIGHT CAUSE THE USSR TO MAKE CONCESSIONS IN EUROPE, POINT OUT THAT THE SOVIETS HAD PUT FORTH EUROPEAN

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SECURITY PROPOSALS LONG BEFORE THE SINO-SOVIET BORDER TROUBLES BEGAN.

I2. DOMESTIC REPERCUSSIONS

ALTHOUGH SCHMIDT'S TRIP HAS BEEN ATTACKED BY THE CDU LEADERSHIP AS INOPPORTUNE ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE CZECH INVASION, BOTH SELBMAN AND SCHMIDT'S PERSONAL AIDE SCHULTZ HAVE TOLD US PRIVATELY THAT THEY BELIEVE THE VISIT HAD NOT DAMAGED SCHMIDT ALTHOUGH IT HAD PROBABLY NOT PROFITED HIM MUCH WITH THE GERMAN VOTERS EITHER. WEISS

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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

: Mr. Sonnenfeldt

DATE: September 01 PM 1949 36
by SEP: Martin Packman *MP*WHITE HOUSE
SITUATION ROOM

CT: Differences in Reporting on the SPD Trip to Moscow

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Die Zeit has Schmidt saying the following when asked what insights the Moscow conversations had provided into the status of Soviet-American relations: "The Soviet side said that at the present time negotiations regarding the beginning of negotiations were in progress. Four weeks ago I was in the US. It seemed to me at that time that the American administration had not yet decided on its initial position or on procedural recommendations. The Soviet side made the same impression on me."

We would point out that the treatment of this point in Bonn's 11499 (paragraph 5) was based on the interview in Die Zeit and is almost identical.

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